

# Selected Guideline Application Decisions for the Fourth Circuit



Prepared by the  
Office of General Counsel  
U.S. Sentencing Commission

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# U.S. SENTENCING COMMISSION GUIDELINES MANUAL

## CASE ANNOTATIONS — FOURTH CIRCUIT

### CHAPTER ONE: *Introduction and General Application Principles*

#### Part B General Application Principles

##### §1B1.1 Application Instructions

*United States v. Fenner*, 147 F.3d 360 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 525 U.S. 1030 (1998). The cross-reference in §2K2.1 required the application of the homicide guideline where death resulted from the firearms offense for which the defendants were sentenced; even though the defendants had previously been acquitted of the homicide. The court of appeals rejected a due process challenge to the cross reference. The court reasoned that the cross reference does not create a new offense or increase the statutory maximum to which the defendants were exposed, but merely limits the discretion of the district court in selecting an appropriate sentence within the statutorily defined range.

##### §1B1.2 Applicable Guidelines

*United States v. Locklear*, 24 F.3d 641 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 978 (1994). The district court erroneously applied §2D1.2 to increase the defendant's base offense level. The defendant was charged with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute cocaine and marihuana. Section 1B1.2 instructs the sentencing judge to determine first the proper guideline and then any applicable specific offense characteristics under that guideline. Section 2D1.1, the guideline applicable in the instant case, has its own specific offense characteristics which do not include a cross-reference to §2D1.2.

##### §1B1.3 Relevant Conduct

*United States v. Butner*, 277 F.3d 481 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 536 U.S. 932 (2002). The district court erred when it did not include the full amount of the post-conversion deposits in the loss amount involved in the conspiracy to commit bankruptcy fraud. The appellate court held that the district court should have included the deposits as relevant conduct for sentencing purposes based on uncontroverted evidence that linked each post-conversion check to the conspiracy.

*United States v. Chong*, 285 F.3d 343 (4th Cir. 2002), *cert. denied*, 543 U.S. 1172 (2005). The district court erred in applying a two-level enhancement for reckless endangerment because a codefendant, in an attempt to flee the police, drove down a one-way street and crashed the vehicle. The appellate court held that the relevant conduct standards are only to be applied in the absence of any specific provisions to the contrary in the underlying guideline. The court noted that a specific provision exists in Application Note 5 of §3C1.2 which states "under this section,

the defendant is accountable for his own conduct and for conduct he aided or abetted, counseled, commanded, induced, procured, or willfully caused." Because the record was incomplete as to whether the defendant's own conduct met the standard set in Note 5, the application of §1B1.3 was inappropriate.

*United States v. Dove*, 247 F.3d 152 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 534 U.S. 945 (2001). The district court erred by including conduct that did not violate state law in its "relevant conduct" calculation under §1B1.3. The appellate court held that relevant conduct under the guidelines must be criminal, rather than merely malignant or immoral.

*United States v. Hodge*, 354 F.3d 305 (4th Cir. 2004). The defendant appealed his conviction and sentence for possession of a firearm and ammunition by a convicted felon, and possession of cocaine with the intent to distribute. At sentencing, the district court found that, various 1996 drug transactions committed by the defendant were relevant conduct to the 1999 offense. The defendant challenged the finding on appeal. The Fourth Circuit affirmed, noting that the district court found that the 1996 transactions and the 1999 offense were not isolated occurrences, but rather, part of a continuous pattern of narcotics trafficking. The record supported the finding that the defendant had never stopped dealing drugs between 1996 and 1999. Accordingly, the district court did not err in counting the 1996 sales as relevant conduct.

*United States v. Kimberlin*, 18 F.3d 1156 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 843 (1994). Absent evidence of exceptional circumstances, it is fair to infer that a codefendant's possession of a dangerous weapon is foreseeable to a defendant with reason to believe that their collaborative criminal venture includes an exchange of controlled substances for a large amount of cash.

*United States v. Moore*, 29 F.3d 175 (4th Cir. 1994). The abuse of trust enhancement must be based on an individualized determination of each defendant's culpability and cannot be based solely on the acts of co-conspirators.

*United States v. Pauley*, 289 F.3d 254 (4th Cir. 2002), *cert. denied*, 537 U.S. 1178 (2003). The district court did not err when it applied the cross-reference under §2D1.1(d)(1) because the murders constituted relevant conduct under §1B1.3(a)(2). The defendant pled guilty to aiding and abetting possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine and marijuana, and the string of thefts for which the defendant was indicted and the double murders that were committed during the course of one of the thefts were all part of the same course of conduct as required under §1B1.3(a)(2).

*United States v. Rhynes*, 206 F.3d 349 (4th Cir. 1999), *cert. denied*, 530 U.S. 1222 (2000). A district court has a separate obligation to make independent factual findings regarding relevant conduct for sentencing purposes. *See United States v. Love*, 134 F.3d 595, 605 (4th Cir. *cert. denied*, 524 U.S. 932 (1998)); §1B1.3. Forfeitures may not act as artificial limitations on the district court's sentencing discretion.

### **§1B1.8**      Use of Certain Information

*United States v. Lopez*, 219 F.3d 343 (4th Cir. 2000). When the plea agreement expressly provides that any self-incriminating information would not be used in determining the applicable sentencing guideline range, the sentencing court cannot use the proffered statement as a basis for making a finding as to drug amount.

*United States v. Washington*, 146 F.3d 219 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 525 U.S. 909 (1998). The district court erred in relying on the defendant's statements, which were protected under the defendant's plea agreement, to his probation officer regarding the amount of cocaine distributed to deny him a reduction for minimal or minor participant.

### **§1B1.10**      Retroactivity of Amended Guideline Ranges

*United States v. Capers*, 61 F.3d 1100 (4th Cir. 1995), *cert. denied*, 517 U.S. 1211 (1996). The defendant was not entitled to retroactive application of §3B1.1, enacted several months after his sentence was imposed because the amendment created a substantive change in the circuit's interpretation of §3B1.1. Courts may give retroactive application to a clarifying (as opposed to substantive) amendment regardless of whether it is listed in §1B1.10.

### **§1B1.11**      Use of Guidelines Manual in Effect on Date of Sentencing (Policy Statement)

*United States v. Lewis*, 235 F.3d 215 (4th Cir. 2000), *cert. denied*, 534 U.S. 814 (2001). In calculating the defendant's sentence for conviction of four counts of filing false tax returns, the district court applied the Manual in effect on the date of sentencing, pursuant to §1B1.11. The defendant appealed, arguing that because the application of the later Manual resulted in increased punishment for the first incident of tax evasion, the sentence violates the *Ex Post Facto* Clause. The appellate court concluded that §1B1.11(b)(3) does not violate the *Ex Post Facto* Clause. The defendant had ample warning when she committed the later acts of tax evasion that those acts would cause her sentence for the earlier crime to be determined in accordance with the Manual applicable to the later offenses. Therefore, the district court was correct in applying the revised edition of the Manual.

## **CHAPTER TWO: *Offense Conduct***

### **Part A Offenses Against the Person**

#### **§2A1.1**      First Degree Murder

*United States v. Carr*, 303 F.3d 539 (4th Cir. 2002), *cert. denied*, 537 U.S. 1138 (2003). The defendant was convicted of intentionally setting fire to an apartment building and causing the death of an occupant. At sentencing, the district court properly cross-referenced the arson guideline to §2A1.1 (First Degree Murder). The defendant then sought a downward departure

pursuant to §2A1.1, Application Note 1, which states that a downward departure may be warranted when the defendant did not knowingly or intentionally cause death. At sentencing the district court found that the defendant was recklessly indifferent as to whether people would be in the apartment building, equating reckless indifference with knowledge. Thus, the court denied the defendant's request for a downward departure. The court of appeals vacated the sentence and remanded for a clear finding as to whether the defendant knowingly caused the death of another.

## **§2A6.1      Threatening or Harassing Communications**

*United States v. Brock*, 211 F.3d 88 (4th Cir. 2000). The defendant pled guilty to one count of violating 47 U.S.C. § 223(a)(1)(E) by making repeated interstate telephone calls for the purpose of harassing his former girlfriend. By the terms of the plea agreement, the defendant admitted only to using "threatening words," and the parties agreed that the applicable guideline was §2A6.1(a)(2), which set the base offense level at six. The district court applied a two-level enhancement pursuant to §2A6.1(b)(2) for making "more than two threats." The Fourth Circuit reversed application of the enhancement. If §2A6.1(a)(2) applies, then the offense did not involve threats to injure a person, as would be required for an enhancement under §2A6.1(b)(2) to apply. Therefore, "because application of both provisions would require the district court to make contradictory factual findings," the enhancement for making more than two threats was improper.

*United States v. Stokes*, 347 F.3d 103 (4th Cir. 2003). The phrase "more than two threats," as used in §2A6.1(b)(2), referred to the number of threatening communications, not the number of victims threatened.

*United States v. Worrell*, 313 F.3d 867 (4th Cir. 2002), *cert. denied*, 538 U.S. 1021 (2003). Pre-threat relevant conduct may be used as evidence of intent to carry out the threat if there is a substantial and direct connection with the offense.

## **Part B Offenses Involving Property**

### **§2B1.1      Larceny, Embezzlement, and Other Forms of Theft; Offenses Involving Stolen Property; Property Damage or Destruction; Fraud and Deceit; Forgery; Offenses Involving Altered or Counterfeit Instruments Other than Counterfeit Bearer Obligations of the United States**

*United States v. Pierce*, 409 F.3d 228 (4th Cir. 2005). The evidence supported the district court's finding that \$235,000 was the loss attributable to the defendant convicted of mail fraud in connection with a bingo operation. The estimated total loss was \$265,598, based on the average monthly purchases of off-the-books bingo games. The Government must prove the amount of loss attributed to a fraud by a preponderance of evidence, and the district court must make a reasonable estimate of the loss, given the available information.

*United States v. Ruhe*, 191 F.3d 376 (4th Cir. 1999). There is no statutory reason why the value of certain goods for jurisdictional purposes should be the same as the value for sentencing purposes. The definition of loss for jurisdictional purposes requires a determination of the value of the goods. Loss for guidelines purposes means that value which most closely represents the loss to the victim, and not the monetary value of the property involved.

### **§2B3.1      Robbery**

*United States v. Reevey*, 364 F.3d 151 (4th Cir. 2004). The defendant was charged in a three-count indictment with carjacking, kidnapping, and possessing a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence. At sentencing, the district court imposed several sentence enhancements, including a two-level enhancement for a threat of death pursuant to §2B3.1(b)(2)(F). The defendant argued that the two-level sentencing enhancement for a threat of death, combined with the sentence for his 18 U.S.C. §924(c) conviction, resulted in an impermissible double counting under the guidelines. The Fourth Circuit stated that the relevant inquiry was whether the threat-of-death enhancement was applied “for possession, brandishing, use, or discharge of an explosive or firearm.” Because both of the threats made by the defendant were to shoot the victim with the firearm, the defendant was convicted of possessing under section §924(c), the court concluded that the application of the enhancement fell within the scope of §2K2.4's double-counting prohibition.

*United States v. Souther*, 221 F.3d 626 (4th Cir. 2000), *cert. denied*, 531 U.S. 1099 (2001). Where the defendant kept his hands in his coat pockets during the robberies after having handed the teller a note indicating that he had a gun, and it appeared that the defendant did have a dangerous weapon, the enhancement was proper even though the defendant did not in fact have a weapon and did not simulate the presence of a weapon with his hands beyond placing them in his pockets.

*United States v. Wilson*, 198 F.3d 467 (4th Cir. 1999), *cert. denied*, 529 U.S. 1076 (2000). The appellate court upheld the district court’s application of §2B3.1(b)(4)(B) for physical restraint enhancement during a carjacking. A gun was placed to the victim’s head, and she was prevented from leaving her car, albeit briefly, until the defendants could get her money and control of the car. Thus, the victim was physically restrained to facilitate the commission of the carjacking.

## **Part C Offenses Involving Public Officials**

### **§2C1.1      Offering, Giving, Soliciting, or Receiving a Bribe; Extortion Under Color of Official Right**

*United States v. Kinter*, 235 F.3d 192 (4th Cir. 2000), *cert. denied*, 532 U.S. 937 (2001). When a middleman defendant acts on behalf of a third-party payer of a bribe, the district court may consider the payer’s bribe-generated benefits when calculating the “benefit received” under

§2C1.1. As long as the profits were reasonably foreseeable to, or the result of acts aided, abetted, counseled, commanded, induced, procured, or willfully caused by, the defendant, the amount of profit can be used in calculating the “benefit received” under §2C1.1.

*United States v. Matzkin*, 14 F.3d 1014 (4th Cir. 1994). The district court properly enhanced the defendant's sentence for influencing an official in a sensitive position pursuant to §2C1.1(b)(2)(B). The defendant was convicted of bribery of a Navy employee who, as supervisory engineer, used his position to acquire and transfer information to the defendant relating to defense contract procurements. The defendant argued that since his Navy contact was only a GS-15 Navy engineer, he was merely a mid-level employee who lacked the power to award contracts on his own. The court of appeals disagreed, citing to the contact's position on the procurement review panel as evidence of his sensitive position. His position on this three person board provided him with the opportunity not only to obtain the information, but also to influence the Navy's final decision making, since it was unlikely that the Navy would grant a bid without the favorable opinion of the review board.

*United States v. Quinn*, 359 F.3d 666 (4th Cir. 2004). The lower court erred because they added the gross rather than the net values of the contracts to calculate the loss for a bribery payment. The defendants also asserted that the district court erred in failing to grant a downward departure because of the sentence disparity between the two appellants and a codefendant who pled guilty rather than go to trial. Disparity is not enough to grant a departure, and the district court found no evidence of prosecutorial misconduct. The sentence was vacated and remanded for recalculation of loss.

## **Part D Offenses Involving Drugs**

### **§2D1.1      Unlawful Manufacturing, Importing, Exporting, Trafficking (Including Possession with Intent to Commit These Offenses); Attempt or Conspiracy**

*United States v. Christmas*, 222 F.3d 141 (4th Cir. 2000), *cert. denied*, 531 U.S. 1098 (2001). Two-level enhancement for possession of a dangerous weapon, pursuant to §2D1.1(b)(1), was proper and did not constitute double jeopardy even though the defendant previously had been convicted in state court for the same possession of the same firearm. Under the doctrine of dual sovereignty, federal prosecutions are not barred by a previous state prosecution for the same or similar conduct.

*United States v. Fletcher*, 74 F.3d 49 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 519 U.S. 857 (1996). The amendments to §2D1.1 and its inclusion in §1B1.10(c) for retroactive application required resentencing. The amended guideline provides that each marijuana plant is equivalent to 100 grams of dry marijuana, regardless of the number or sex of the plants involved. Under the amended provision, the defendant was responsible for the equivalent of 72.2 kilograms of dry marijuana (level 22, guideline range 41 to 51 months), rather than 722 kilograms (level 30, guideline range 97 to 121 months).

*United States v. Fullilove*, 388 F.3d 104 (4th Cir. 2004). In a case in which law enforcement officers removed 26 grams of cocaine base from a suspicious package prior to its delivery, inserting a transmitter and leaving .37 grams for delivery, the appellate court held that the district court should have sentenced based on the pre-delivery weight rather than the delivery weight of .37 grams. The appellate court determined the district court's calculation resulted from an error in interpreting the guideline language. The defendant's culpability was not related to the quantity delivered but to the quantity planned for delivery.

*United States v. Houchins*, 364 F.3d 182 (4th Cir. 2004). At sentencing, the district court found that the defendants had subjected their community to a substantial risk of harm through the unsafe manufacture of methamphetamine, and it concluded that their offense levels should be enhanced by three levels pursuant to §2D1.1(b)(5)(B). The defendants argued that, because they were not operating an "active" methamphetamine laboratory, no precursor chemicals were found at their production sites, and no quantifiable amounts of toxic or hazardous substances were disposed of into the environment surrounding those sites, the district court's application of the risk enhancement to their offense level was improper. Identifying the four factors a sentencing court must assess under §2D1.1 in determining whether an offense created a substantial risk of harm to human life or the environment, the Fourth Circuit concluded that the district court had properly assessed all four factors, and did not err in determining that the risk enhancement was warranted under each.

*United States v. Hyppolite*, 65 F.3d 1151 (4th Cir. 1995), *cert. denied*, 517 U.S. 1162 (1996). The district court did not commit clear error in converting all the cocaine powder found in the defendant's apartment into cocaine base for sentencing purposes, where credible evidence was presented to establish that the powder cocaine was manufactured into cocaine base for distribution.

*United States v. Kimberlin*, 18 F.3d 1156 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 843 (1994). The two-level enhancement applied to the defendant's base levels as a result of co-conspirator's possession of a firearm was proper since it was foreseeable that the firearm would be used in the drug offense.

*United States v. Lipford*, 203 F.3d 259 (4th Cir. 2000). The appellate court vacated the defendant's sentence after it reinstated the defendant's 18 U.S.C. § 924(c) conviction. The district court had increased the defendant's sentence by two levels after finding that the defendant possessed a firearm during the drug conspiracy, after ordering a judgment of acquittal on the defendant's 924(c) conviction. The appellate court reinstated the defendant's 924(c)(1) conviction. The court vacated the sentence on the drug count and remanded to the district court for a determination of whether the increase under §2D1.1(b)(1) was warranted in light of the 924(c)(1) conviction.

*United States v. McAllister*, 272 F.3d 228 (4th Cir. 2001). The district court erred in applying the two-level enhancement under §2D1.1(b)(1) for possession of a firearm during a



drug felony. The Fourth Circuit found that there was no reliable evidence to support the application of the enhancement. The only evidence upon which the district court based the enhancement was contained in a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) investigation report. The report was based on the interview of a single person who claimed that he saw the defendant with handguns “on many occasions.” The report was admitted into evidence and read into the record, but the report did not assert that the informant saw the defendant with a handgun during a narcotics transaction.

**§2D1.2**      Drug Offenses Occurring Near Protected Locations or Involving Underage or Pregnant Individuals; Attempt or Conspiracy

*See United States v. Locklear*, 24 F.3d 641 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 978 (1994), §1B1.2, p. 1.

**Part G Offenses Involving Prostitution, Sexual Exploitation of Minors, and Obscenity**

**§2G2.2**      Trafficking in Material Involving the Sexual Exploitation of a Minor; Receiving, Transporting, Shipping, or Advertising Material Involving the Sexual Exploitation of a Minor; Possessing Material Involving the Sexual Exploitation of a Minor with Intent to Traffic

*United States v. Dotson*, 324 F.3d 256 (4th Cir. 2003). The defendant pled guilty to attempting to receive in commerce a child pornography videotape. The defendant answered an advertisement on the computer and placed an order for a child pornography videotape. The district court did not err in applying a two-level increase under §2G2.2(b)(5) for the use of a computer in connection with the offense. The Fourth Circuit concluded that under the guidelines, those who seek out and respond to notice and advertisement of such materials are as culpable as those who initially send out the notice and advertisement. The court affirmed the district court’s application of the enhancement.

**Part K Offenses Involving Public Safety**

**§2K1.4**      Arson; Property Damage by Use of Explosives

*See United States v. Davis*, 202 F.3d 212 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 530 U.S. 1236 (2000). Shooting a gun constituted a “use of explosives” under §2K1.4.

**§2K2.1**      Unlawful Receipt, Possession, or Transportation of Firearms or Ammunition

*United States v. Blount*, 337 F.3d 404 (4th Cir. 2003). The question on appeal was whether a §2K2.1(b)(5) enhancement should apply when a defendant acquired a firearm during a theft or burglary, but did not use the firearm or show any willingness to do so. The Fourth Circuit held that the burglary did qualify as “another felony offense” but that a §2K2.1(b)(5)

enhancement was nonetheless improper because the record did not demonstrate a sufficient nexus between the burglary and the defendant's possession of a firearm. The court noted that its past opinions treated "in connection with" as synonymous with "in relation to." In other words, a weapon is used or possessed "in connection with" another offense if the weapon facilitated or has a tendency to facilitate the [other] offense. *Id.* at 829. The firearm must have some purpose or effect with respect to the crime; its presence or involvement could not be the result of accident or coincidence.

See *United States v. Fenner*, 147 F.3d 360 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 525 U.S. 1030 (1998), §1B1.1, p. 1.

*United States v. Garnett*, 243 F.3d 824 (4th Cir. 2001). The defendant stole a \$1,300 machine gun and gave it to another person to sell and use the proceeds to obtain drugs. The defendant received \$20 worth of cocaine base. At sentencing, the district court increased the defendant's offense level for using the firearm in connection with a second felony offense. The appellate court held that, while it was clear that defendant used the firearm to facilitate a drug-related offense, the evidence was insufficient to find that the offense rose to the level of a felony offense. There was no finding of the specific amount of cocaine base involved, and such a finding was necessary in order to determine whether the second offense was a felony or a misdemeanor. The appellate court held, as a matter of law, that the purchase or possession of any felony amount of drugs would constitute a felony drug trafficking crime for purposes of 18 U.S.C. § 924(c).

*United States v. Greene*, 108 Fed. Appx. 814 (4th Cir. 2004), *aff'd*, No. 05-4009, 2005 WL 3200851 (4<sup>th</sup> Cir. Nov. 30, 2005). The appellate court upheld the district court's application of a two-level enhancement for possession of a firearm. The defendant claimed the district court clearly erred in adding the enhancement since it was "clearly improbable" that sporting and hunting firearms, locked in a display cabinet, were connected with his drug sales. He noted that three of the four sales took place at his place of business, not at home where the guns were kept. The appellate court disagreed, and agreed instead with the district court which found that the large number of firearms present at the defendant's home could intimidate anyone who came there to buy drugs, and that the guns could have been used to protect the drugs in the defendant's home. The appellate court also noted that the government need not establish a perfect connection between the firearms and the offense, and that possession of the weapon during the commission of the offense is all that is necessary.

*United States v. Levenite*, 277 F.3d 454 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 535 U.S. 1105 (2002). The district court did not err by including detonators as weapons for a six-level enhancement under §2K2.1(b)(1)(C). The appellate court held that since §2K2.1 includes destructive devices as defined by 26 U.S.C. § 5845, a detonator could potentially be a destructive device subject to proof from the government that the defendant intended to use it as a weapon. The government produced evidence that the defendant had no legitimate reason or commercial purpose for possession of the detonators. The government also produced testimony that the detonators were manufactured and designed to set off explosives like dynamite. Finally, the government produced evidence that the detonators were seized from the defendant's house along with various other firearms. The appellate court held that although the evidence presented by the

government was circumstantial, it was sufficient to support a finding that the defendant intended to use the detonators as weapons.

*United States v. Payton*, 28 F.3d 17 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 976 (1994). The defendant was convicted of being a felon in possession of a firearm in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1). He argued that his prior state conviction for involuntary manslaughter was not a "crime of violence" because it was not a specific intent crime and because the catchall phrase of §4B1.2 applies only to crimes against property. The circuit court relied on §4B1.2, Application Note 2, which specifically includes manslaughter within the definition of a "crime of violence." Although the circuit court acknowledged that the application note does not distinguish between voluntary and involuntary manslaughter, it adopted the Ninth Circuit's reasoning in *United States v. Springfield*, 829 F.2d 860 (9th Cir. 1987), and held that involuntary manslaughter, by its nature, "involves the death of another person [and] is highly likely to be the result of violence. It thus comes within the intent, if not the precise wording of section 924(c)(3)(B)]."

*United States v. Schaal*, 340 F.3d 196 (4th Cir. 2003). On appeal, the defendant argued that the district court impermissibly double counted by applying both the §2K2.1(b)(4) enhancement for stolen firearms and the §2K2.1(b)(5) enhancement, because the defendant used or possessed a firearm in connection with another felony offense. The defendant argued that the §2K2.1(b)(5) enhancement already took into account the fact that the weapons were stolen and therefore application of the §2K2.1(b)(4) enhancement constituted double counting. The Fourth Circuit concluded that nothing in the guidelines prohibited the application of both enhancements under the instant circumstances, noting that the Commission had addressed the issue of double counting with regard to §2K2.1(b)(4) without forbidding simultaneous application of the §2K2.1(b)(4) and (b)(5) enhancements. In addition, the court also found that the two enhancements were conceptually separate, as evidenced by the fact that either could apply in the absence of the other. Consequently, the court concluded that the district court did not engage in impermissible double counting in applying the two enhancements together.

*United States v. Solomon*, 274 F.3d 825 (4th Cir. 2001). The defendant purchased a 9mm pistol and falsely answered "no" to the question regarding whether he had ever been convicted of a misdemeanor crime on a federal form, violating 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(9). The defendant received an eight-level reduction for possessing a firearm solely for lawful sporting purposes or collection under §2K2.1(b)(2). The Fourth Circuit noted that the district court applied the lawful sporting purposes or collection reduction despite the fact that there was no evidence of the purpose for which the weapon had been used. Section 2K2.1(b)(2) permits a reduction only if a firearm is possessed "solely for lawful sporting purposes or collection—and no other purpose." Because neither the district court nor the probation officer made any findings as to the exact use of the firearm, it could not be said to fit this definition. Therefore, because the record lacked a factual basis for the reduction, the case was remanded to the district court for resentencing.

**§2K2.4**      Use of Firearms or Armor-Piercing Ammunition During or in Relation to Certain Crimes

*United States v. Hamrick*, 43 F.3d 877 (4th Cir.) (*en banc*), *cert. denied*, 516 U.S. 825 (1995). The district court did not err in concluding that the improvised dysfunctional incendiary letter bomb used by the defendant in his attempt to assassinate a United States Attorney was a "destructive device" under 18 U.S.C. § 924(c)(1). The defendant argued that the terms "firearm" and "destructive device" in section 924(c)(1) were interchangeable and thus the district court should have imposed the five-year sentence prescribed for use of a "firearm" instead of the 30-year sentence prescribed for use of a "destructive device." The circuit court ruled that while "firearm" is defined to include "destructive device," the terms are not interchangeable. Rather, a "destructive device" is a subset of "firearm," and the statute is unambiguous that use of a destructive device shall be punished by 30 years' imprisonment.

**Part L Offenses Involving Immigration, Naturalization, and Passports**

**§2L1.2**      Unlawfully Entering or Remaining in the United States

*United States v. Amaya-Portillo*, 423 F.3d 427 (4th Cir. 2005). A felony under the Controlled Substance Act means any federal or state offense classified by applicable federal or state law as a felony. Since the defendant's Maryland conviction for cocaine possession is neither classified as a felony by federal or Maryland law, the offense is not a felony under 21 U.S.C. § 802(13), nor an aggravated felony under section 2L1.2 of the guidelines.

*Bearano-Urrutia v. Gonzalez*, 413 F.3d 444 (4th Cir. 2005). In determining whether a crime fits the definition of crime of violence, for purpose of Immigration and Naturalization Act provision authorizing removal of aliens convicted of an aggravated felony, the court must look to the intrinsic nature of the crime, not to the facts of each individual commission of the offense. The alien's conviction for involuntary manslaughter, under Virginia law, was not a "crime of violence," and thus was not an "aggravated felony" warranting removal. Although a violation of Virginia's involuntary manslaughter statute intrinsically involved a substantial risk that the perpetrator's actions would cause physical harm, since it required reckless disregard for human life, it did not intrinsically involve a substantial risk that force would be applied as a means to an end.

*United States v. Campbell*, 94 F.3d 125 (4th Cir. 1996), *cert. denied*, 520 U.S. 1242 (1997). The district court correctly determined that the defendant's manslaughter conviction was a crime of violence included in the definition of "aggravated felony" under 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(43)(f) and, therefore, properly applied a 16-level enhancement to the defendant's sentence. The defendant argued that the district court improperly applied the statute because his underlying "aggravated felony" conviction preceded the amendment date that extended the definition of an "aggravated felony" to include crimes of violence. The appellate court disagreed, and held that the obvious intent of the amendment was to allow the predicated offenses to be used as enhancement penalties for those aliens who had been deported after being convicted of an aggravated felony. Additionally, the court noted that in considering a sentence

under §2L1.2(b)(2), all prior felonies, no matter how ancient, were relevant in the determination of a sentence.

## **Part S Money Laundering and Monetary Transaction Reporting**

### **§2S1.1      Laundering of Monetary Instruments; Engaging in Monetary Transactions in Property Derived from Unlawful Activity**

*United States v. Barton*, 32 F.3d 61 (4th Cir. 1994). The defendant pled guilty to attempted money laundering. The district court properly rejected the defendant's argument that §2S1.1(b)(2)'s definition of "value of the funds" should be determined by the amount of money actually used in the government sting. Rather, the "value of the funds" is the amount of money the defendant agreed to launder. To hold otherwise would allow the government to affect a sentencing variable simply by adjusting the amount of flash money used, and it would ignore the amount the defendant agreed and intended to launder.

*United States v. Godwin*, 272 F.3d 659 (4th Cir. 2001), *cert. denied*, 535 U.S. 1069 (2002). The district court correctly applied §2S1.1 in quantifying the loss attributable to the fraud scheme of defendants convicted of mail fraud under 18 U.S.C. § 1341, conspiracy to commit money laundering under 18 U.S.C. § 1956(h), six counts of money laundering under Section 1956(a)(1)(A)(i), and three counts of making false declarations in a bankruptcy case under 18 U.S.C. § 152(3). The Fourth Circuit ruled that the district court's determination of the loss attributable to their fraud scheme was correct despite the defendants' contention that certain amounts of money paid by three non-testifying investors and funds obtained in good faith should not have been included. The court in this case found no error in the district court's determination under §2S1.1 of the amount of money involved in this type of crime because it is an indicator of the magnitude of the commercial enterprise.

### **§2S1.3      Structuring Transactions to Evade Reporting Requirements; Failure to Report Cash or Monetary Transactions; Failure to File Currency and Monetary Instrument Report; Knowingly Filing False Reports; Bulk Cash Smuggling; Establishing or Maintaining Prohibited Accounts**

*United States v. Abdi*, 342 F.3d 313 (4th Cir. 2003), *cert. denied*, 540 U.S. Ct. 1167 (2004). The district court did not err when it concluded that the defendants were not entitled to the sentencing reduction offered by the safe harbor provision of §2S1.3(b)(2). The defendants pled guilty to conspiracy to structure financial transactions to evade reporting requirements in violation of 31 U.S.C. § 5324. The defendants failed to demonstrate that the proceeds that they structured were from lawful activities and that the monies they transmitted were to be used for a lawful purpose. Accordingly, the defendants were unable to meet their burden of satisfying the conditions for the safe harbor provision to obtain a reduction of their sentence offense level.

## **Part T Offenses Involving Taxation**

### **§2T3.1**      Evading Import Duties or Restrictions (Smuggling); Receiving or Trafficking in Smuggled Property

*United States v. Hassanzadeh*, 271 F.3d 574 (4th Cir. 2001). The district court did not err in sentencing a defendant for aiding and abetting the making of a false statement and illegally importing carpets of Iranian origin. Hassanzadeh challenged the method used to calculate the loss figure on which his offense level was based. The Fourth Circuit held that the calculation used by the court applies to “items for which entry is prohibited, limited, or restricted,” and “harmful” under §2T3.1. Noting the Sentencing Commission’s emphasis that the evaded duty “may not adequately reflect the harm to society or protected industries,” the Fourth Circuit concluded that contribution of financial support to terrorism constitutes greater harm to society than harms usually associated with the illegal importation of goods. Thus, the goods in question clearly fit the definition of posing a significant “harm to society” and received the correct calculation.

## **Part X Other Offenses**

### **§2X3.1**      Accessory After the Fact

*United States v. Godwin*, 253 F.3d 784 (4th Cir. 2001). The defendant was convicted of harboring a fugitive in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g). The applicable guideline for harboring a fugitive is the accessory-after-the-fact guideline, §2X3.1, which sets the base level at “6 levels lower than the offense level for the underlying offense.” The “underlying offense” is defined as “the offense as to which the defendant is convicted of being an accessory,” §2X3.1, comment (n.1). The fugitive in this case was convicted of possession of a firearm by a prohibited person, which carries a base offense level of 14 under §2K2.1(a)(6). Instead of using a base offense level of 14, the district court used the base level of 24 for the defendant, the level that the fugitive was *actually* sentenced to and which reflected enhancements for criminal history. The Fourth Circuit held that there is no support for this interpretation in the language of §2X3.1, because that guideline refers to the level of the “underlying offense” and not the level actually applied to the “principal offender.” The court noted, however, that the base level could be higher than 14 if the principal had received enhancements for the firearms charge pursuant to §2K2.1 which “involve the actual conduct of the [principal] in the context of the charged offense,” as opposed to “enhancements based on the criminal history” of the principal.

## **CHAPTER THREE: *Adjustments***

### **Part A Victim-Related Adjustments**

#### **§3A1.1**      Hate Crime Motivation or Vulnerable Victim

*United States v. Bolden*, 325 F.3d 471 (4th Cir. 2003). The district court erred in applying the vulnerable victim two-level enhancement pursuant to §3A1.1. Although it was

indisputable that the victims were elderly, and many of them likely suffered from both mental and physical ailments, there were no factual findings showing that the vulnerability of the Emerald Health's residents facilitated the defendant's offenses. Furthermore, there were no factual findings supporting the idea that these residents were targeted because of their unusual vulnerability.

*United States v. Bonetti*, 277 F.3d 441 (4th Cir. 2002). The adjustment under §3A1.1 for a vulnerable victim applied only to the victim's vulnerability and not to the duration of the offense.

*United States v. Hill*, 322 F.3d 301 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 540 U.S. 894 (2003). The Fourth Circuit noted that under §3A1.1 a defendant should receive a two-level enhancement if he knew or should have known that a victim of the offense was a vulnerable victim. In the instant case, the victim was in his mid-sixties, had suffered a stroke, and lived like a hermit. The court held that there was more than enough evidence to support the district court's finding that the vulnerable victim enhancement applied.

### **§3A1.2      Official Victim**

*United States v. Harrison*, 272 F.3d 220 (4th Cir. 2001), *cert. denied*, 537 U.S. 839 (2002). The district court correctly applied adjustments for assault on an officer and reckless endangerment during flight under §§3A1.2(b) and 3C1.2. Defendants Harrison and Burnett pled guilty to armed bank robbery, 18 U.S.C. § 2113(a), (d), and using or carrying a firearm in a crime of violence, 18 U.S.C. § 924(c). After robbing a bank, the defendants engaged police in a high-speed multiple car chase during which an accomplice fired shots at officers and both vehicles crashed. The defendants argued that the adjustments made were based on the same conduct. The Fourth Circuit found that the adjustments made under §§3A1.2 and 3C1.2 were not erroneous because each was based on separate conduct. The court also held that the district court did not err in finding that the unarmed codefendant could reasonably foresee that one of his armed codefendants could fire a weapon that would create a risk of serious bodily injury and that the defendant aided and abetted conduct that created a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury to the children in the getaway cars and the public during the high-speed flight that followed the robbery.

## **Part B Role in the Offense**

### **§3B1.1      Aggravating Role**

*United States v. Nicolaou*, 180 F.3d 565 (4th Cir. 1999). The district court did not err in applying a leadership enhancement after the defendant's related offenses were grouped. The defendants were convicted of conducting an illegal gambling business, money laundering, and income tax charges. Furthermore, the appellate court concluded that the defendant's gambling offenses were relevant conduct under the guidelines because they occurred during the commission of, and in preparation for "the money laundering." Without the gambling operation, there would have been no ill-gotten gains to launder.

*United States v. Rashwan*, 328 F.3d 160 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 540 U.S. 922 (2003). The Fourth Circuit noted that, in order to increase a sentence under §3B1.1, a sentencing court should consider whether the defendant exercised decision making authority for the venture, whether he recruited others to participate in the crime, whether he took part in planning or organizing the offense, and the degree of control and authority that he exercised over others. Furthermore, the court noted that leadership over only one other participant is sufficient to support the adjustment as long as there was some control exercised.

*United States v. Rubhayan*, 406 F.3d 292 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 126 S. CT. 291 (2005). Enhancing the defendant's offense level, under the guideline which governed exercise of leadership role in otherwise extensive criminal activity, was not appropriate, on the defendant's conviction of charge of obstructing justice by lying to the court and the jury and having his girlfriend do likewise. The court counted the jurors in the defendant's prior trial as part of that activity to satisfy the numerical requirement in the sentencing enhancement, which required involvement of at least five persons. The jurors in prior trial were the objects of the defendant's criminal scheme to obstruct justice and did nothing to advance that offense.

*United States v. Turner*, 198 F.3d 425 (4th Cir. 1999), *cert. denied*, 529 U.S. 1061 (2000). Because the offense of intentionally killing and causing the intentional killing of an individual while engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise did not include a supervisory role as an element of the offense, a two-level adjustment pursuant to §3B1.1(c) for the defendant's role in the offense was not impermissible double counting.

### **§3B1.2**      Mitigating Role

*United States v. Pratt*, 239 F.3d 640 (4th Cir. 2001). Whether the defendant is a minor participant in the conspiracy is measured not only by comparing his role to that of his codefendants, but also by determining whether his “conduct is material or essential to committing the offense.”

*See United States v. Washington*, 146 F.3d 219 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 525 U.S. 909 (1998), §1B1.8, p. 3.

### **§3B1.3**      Abuse of Position of Trust or Use of Special Skill

*United States v. Akinkoye*, 185 F.3d 192 (4th Cir. 1999), *cert. denied*, 528 U.S. 1177 (2000). The Fourth Circuit has rejected a mechanistic approach to abuse of trust that excludes defendants from consideration based on their job titles. Instead, several factors should be examined in determining whether a defendant abused a position of trust. Those factors include: 1) whether the defendant had either special duties or special access to information not available to other employees; 2) the extent of discretion the defendant possesses; 3) whether the defendant's acts indicate that he is “more culpable than the others” who are in positions similar to his and engage in criminal acts; and 4) viewing the entire question of abuse of trust from the victim's perspective. The appellate court stated that in reviewing the factors in the defendant's case, the district court did not err in determining that the defendant held a position of trust. First, the defendant had special access to information as a real estate agent. The agency's clients not



only gave the agency confidential information, but also keys to their homes. In addition, the defendant's position made his criminal activities harder to detect. Finally, although the banks may have ultimately borne the financial burden, the clients were victimized as well because their identities and credit histories were used to facilitate the crime.

*United States v. Bolden*, 325 F.3d 471 (4th Cir. 2003). The Fourth Circuit noted that, under §3B1.3, an adjustment in the base offense level was authorized if the defendant abused a position of public or private trust in a manner that significantly facilitated the commission or concealment of the offense. Furthermore, the court noted that the question of whether an individual occupied a position of trust should be addressed from the perspective of the victim. In the instant case, the victims were Medicaid and the American taxpayers. Medicaid entrusted the defendant with thousands of dollars in prospective payments to Emerald Health, that were to be used for the benefit of its Medicaid beneficiaries. Her abuse of that authority contributed significantly to the commission and concealment of the fraud scheme. Accordingly, the court affirmed the district court's application of the "abuse of position of trust" adjustment.

*United States v. Caplinger*, 339 F.3d 226 (4th Cir. 2003). The district court erred in applying a two-level enhancement under §3B1.3 on the ground that the defendant abused a position of trust when he misrepresented himself as a prominent physician in an effort to attract investors. Application of an enhancement under §3B1.3 required more than a mere showing that the victim had confidence in the defendant; something more akin to a fiduciary function was required. The fact that the defendant posed as a physician did not by itself mean that he occupied a position of trust. The defendant did not assume a physician-patient relationship with any of the victims. Rather, the victims were simply investors who invested their money in IPI. The court concluded that although the defendant's assumed status as an accomplished physician was used to persuade the investors to place money into the defendant's venture, the facts did not support the conclusion that the defendant, by posing as a physician, occupied a position of trust with the victims as that term was used in §3B1.3 of the guidelines. Accordingly, the district court erred in applying a two level enhancement under §3B1.3.

*United States v. Ebersole*, 411 F.3d 517 (4th Cir. 2005), *cert. denied*, 126 S. CT. 1142 (2006). The facts set forth in the presentence report did not support the imposition of the §3B1.3 enhancement. Representatives of the victimized federal agencies, in awarding contracts to the defendant's company, relied on the defendant's assertions that he was certified by state and federal regulating agencies as a bomb-sniffing canine team handler. The presentence report describes an arms-length commercial relationship where trust is created by the defendant's personality or the victim's credulity. These facts cannot justify the abuse of trust enhancement.

*United States v. Godwin*, 272 F.3d 659 (4th Cir. 2001), *cert. denied*, 535 U.S. 1069 (2002). Adjustment for an abuse of trust was permitted because the sentencing court found ample evidence to support the adjustment. The evidence included the defendant's solicitation of investors through her work as an accountant and as a tax preparer, as well as testimony from witnesses who stated that they gave money to the defendant because they trusted her.

*United States v. Gormley*, 201 F.3d 290 (4th Cir. 2000). The district court erred in applying a §3B1.3 special skill enhancement. The defendant operated a tax preparation business

out of his convenience store. He was not an accountant and had no special training in the area of tax preparation. The district court applied a §3B1.3 special skills enhancement, relying on the fact that the defendant used some special skills, and that he availed himself of services of co-conspirators who had special skills. The appellate court reversed, concluding that the defendant did not have special skills, and that his co-conspirators' skills were not relevant to the enhancement. The appellate court noted that "role in the offense" adjustments, such as the special skill enhancement, are based on a defendant's status, not based on a co-conspirator's action. Therefore, to the extent the district court relied on the special skills of the defendant's co-conspirators, it committed clear error. The district court also erred in its interpretation of the guidelines by concluding that tax preparation as practiced by the defendant was a special skill. The appellate court noted that a special skill usually requires substantial education, training or licensing, and that the record reflected that the defendant did not have any formal training in the areas of tax preparation.

*United States v. Mackey*, 114 F.3d 470 (4th Cir. 1997). The appeals court affirmed the district court's application of a two-level enhancement for an abuse of trust. The defendant, a group leader in the Sales Audit Department at Woodward and Lothrop, used her computer authorization code to perpetrate fraudulent returns of merchandise credits totaling approximately \$40,000. The district court enhanced the defendant's sentence two levels under §3B1.3 of the sentencing guidelines for "Abuse of Position of Trust or Use of Special Skill." The defendant argued that the enhancement was unwarranted because her position did not fall within the definition of "public or private trust." The defendant argued that her position was functionally equivalent to an ordinary bank teller. The district court rejected the defendant's argument. The defendant was one of two group leaders in the department and possessed a computer authorization code that others did not and used that code to conceal the fraudulent transactions.

*See United States v. Moore*, 29 F.3d 175 (4th Cir. 1994), §1B1.3, p. 2.

#### **§3B1.4      Using a Minor to Commit a Crime**

*United States v. Murphy*, 254 F.3d 511 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 534 U.S. 1073 (2001). The plain language of the congressional directive to "promulgate guidelines or amend existing guidelines to provide that a defendant 21 years of age or older who has been convicted of an offense shall receive an appropriate sentence enhancement if the defendant involved a minor in the commission of the offense," did not expressly prohibit a younger defendant from receiving such an enhancement.

### **Part C Obstruction**

#### **§3C1.1      Obstruction or Impeding the Administration of Justice**

*United States v. Godwin*, 272 F.3d 659 (4th Cir. 2001), *cert. denied*, 535 U.S. 1069 (2002). The district court correctly enhanced the defendants' sentence for obstruction of justice under §3C1.1. The Fourth Circuit stated that §3C1.1 permits an increase in the defendant's offense level by two levels if the defendant commits perjury by giving "false testimony

concerning a material matter with the willful intent to provide false testimony, rather than as a result of confusion, mistake, or faulty memory.”

*United States v. Gormley*, 201 F.3d 290 (4th Cir. 2000). The defendant was convicted of conspiracy to defraud the United States and filing fraudulent tax return claims in connection with a rapid refund enterprise. The defendant appealed only his sentence specifically with respect to an enhancement for obstruction of justice and an enhancement for use of a special skill. After the trial, but before sentencing, the probation officer charged with preparing the presentence report interviewed the defendant. According to the probation officer, the defendant denied knowingly listing false information on the tax returns, recording only the information provided to him by his clients, the validity of which he did not investigate. As a result, the defendant denied engaging in any criminal activities. Noting a “denial of guilt” exception to the obstruction of justice enhancement, the appellate court nevertheless affirmed its application inasmuch as the defendant’s statements to the probation officer “went beyond merely denying his guilt and implicated his taxpayer clients in the scheme to defraud the IRS,” and were material inasmuch as the statements could have affected the sentence ultimately imposed.

*United States v. Hudson*, 272 F.3d 260 (4th Cir. 2001). The defendant pled guilty to drug trafficking and was released on bond pending sentencing. He then failed to appear at his sentencing hearing because he feared the length of his upcoming sentence. The defendant failed to appear at scheduled meetings and avoided apprehension by police for more than six months. The district court refused to enhance the defendant’s sentence because it accepted his explanation for his absence. The Fourth Circuit held that his flight served as a willful obstruction of justice and remanded the case for resentencing.

*See United States v. Quinn*, 359 F.3d 666 (4th Cir. 2004), §2C1.1, p. 6.

*United States v. Stewart*, 256 F.3d 231, 253 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 534 U.S. 1049 (2001). The district court did not err by finding that the defendant obstructed justice where the defendant engaged in continuous misconduct throughout the trial, making gun-like hand gestures and shouting outside the jury room in an attempt to intimidate the jurors.

*United States v. Sun*, 278 F.3d 302 (4th Cir. 2002). The district court did not err when it enhanced the sentence of a defendant because he willfully made materially false statements when he testified in his defense at trial. The district court found that the defendant made several materially false statements with the willful intent to deceive the court including his reliance on the advice of counsel, on the advice of a State Department official, and in his denial of his intent when he committed the illegal act. Because the defendant lied about these material issues and matters at the heart of the case, the court found sufficient willful intent to deceive and rejected the defendant’s challenge to the two-level increase.

### **§3C1.2**      Reckless Endangerment During Flight

*See United States v. Chong*, 285 F.3d 343 (4th Cir. 2002), cert. denied, 543 U.S. 1172 (2005). §1B1.3, p. 1.

*United States v. Harrison*, 272 F.3d 220 (4th Cir. 2001), cert. denied, 537 U.S. 839 (2002). It is permissible to make adjustments under both §§3A1.2 and 3C1.2 because each adjustment is based upon separate conduct.

## **Part D Multiple Counts**

### **§3D1.2**      Groups of Closely Related Counts

*United States v. Bolden*, 325 F.3d 471 (4th Cir. 2003). Fraud and money laundering offenses should only be grouped when they are closely related. The defendants' money laundering activities were essential to achieving the improper extraction of monies from Medicaid, and their money laundering and fraud activities were part of a continuous, common scheme to defraud Medicaid. The court concluded that the district court had properly grouped the fraud and money laundering offenses.

*United States v. Pitts*, 176 F.3d 239 (4th Cir.), cert. denied, 528 U.S. 911 (1999). The appellate court upheld the district court's decision not to group the defendant's attempted espionage and conspiracy to commit espionage convictions for sentencing purposes. The district court determined that the defendant's conduct was not a single course of conduct with a single objective as contemplated by §3D1.2. The appellate court held if the defendant's criminal conduct constitutes single episodes of criminal behavior, each satisfying an individual—albeit identical—goal, then the district court should not group the offenses.

*United States v. Walker*, 112 F.3d 163 (4th Cir. 1997). The district court correctly calculated the defendant's sentence involving mail fraud and money laundering. The district court grouped the counts together pursuant to §3D1.2(d) and applied the higher base offense level for money laundering under §3D1.3(b). Along with other adjustments, the defendant received a four-level specific offense characteristic increase under the money laundering guideline because the fraudulent scheme involved between \$600,000 and \$1,000,000. The defendant argued that in determining his specific offense characteristic, the district court should have considered only \$5,051.01 in fictitious interest payments specifically identified in the money laundering counts of the indictment. The government argued that all of the allegations in the mail fraud counts, which the defendant conceded involved \$850,913.59, were incorporated into the money laundering counts by the grand jury. Furthermore, the facts of the case established that the mail fraud and money laundering crimes were interrelated. The Fourth Circuit held that the defendant's money laundering was part of the fraudulent scheme because the funds were used to make fictitious interest payments. Additionally, the circuit court found that the sentencing guidelines permitted the district court to use the amount of money the defendant obtained through mail fraud as the basis for calculating his specific offense characteristic under the money laundering guideline.

## Part E Acceptance of Responsibility

### §3E1.1 Acceptance of Responsibility

*United States v. Dickerson*, 114 F.3d 464 (4th Cir. 1997). The district court erred in giving the defendant credit for acceptance of responsibility and for reducing his sentence pursuant to §3E1.1. The district court based its decision to grant the adjustment on two grounds: the defendant saved both the court and the government real time by having a bench trial; and the defendant never indicated at trial that he did not accept the fact that he lied. The Fourth Circuit reversed, reasoning that the guidelines make no distinction between a bench and a jury trial, but rather between a defendant who puts the government to its burden of proof at trial and a defendant who does not. Additionally, the circuit court found that, at least in part, the defendant went to trial to attempt to prove that his lies to the grand jury were not material. Because materiality is an essential element of any perjury offense, the defendant challenged his factual guilt. For these reasons, the defendant was not entitled to an acceptance of responsibility reduction.

*United States v. Hudson*, 272 F.3d 260 (4th Cir. 2001). The Fourth Circuit reversed the district court's decision to grant the defendant a reduction in his sentence under §3E1.1 for acceptance of responsibility. The defendant pled guilty to drug trafficking but had engaged in conduct that constituted obstruction to justice. The Fourth Circuit found that the reduction was precluded.

*United States v. Pauley*, 289 F.3d 254 (4th Cir. 2002), *cert. denied*, 537 U.S. 1178 (2003). The district court did not err in its refusal to reduce the defendant's base offense level for acceptance of responsibility because the defendant clearly did not accept responsibility. The defendant filed an appeal denying the amount of drugs ascribed to him by the court under a relevant conduct analysis and denied his culpability in the murders listed as relevant conduct by the court. Such denials do not constitute acceptance of responsibility.

*United States v. Ruhe*, 191 F.3d 376 (4th Cir. 1999). The defendant was convicted of conspiring to transport stolen property and aiding and abetting. The defendant appealed the district court's denial of granting an adjustment for acceptance of responsibility, arguing that it was clear error for the district court to refuse to consider his polygraph evidence at sentencing given that such evidence clearly entitled him to a downward departure. The polygraph evidence, however, only indicated the defendant's continued denial of responsibility because it only served as evidence that he did not realize that the property was stolen, *i.e.*, that he did not commit the crime for which he was charged. Consequently, the district court did not commit any error in denying the decrease for acceptance of responsibility.

## CHAPTER FOUR: *Criminal History and Criminal Livelihood*

### Part A Criminal History

#### §4A1.1 Criminal History Category

*United States v. Collins*, 415 F.3d 304 (4th Cir. 2005). The defendant challenged his criminal history category on appeal, alleging that the government failed to show that there was no constitutional defect regarding that prior conviction. The Fourth Circuit held that for purposes of determining defendant's criminal history category under sentencing guidelines, the presumption of regularity that attached to final judgments put the burden on the defendant to raise an inference of the invalidity of his prior convictions, rather than on the government to show that there was no constitutional defect regarding prior convictions.

*United States v. Dixon*, 230 F.3d 109 (4th Cir. 2000). Suspended time on a defendant's prior state convictions should not count as time served under the sentencing guidelines. Suspended sentences are counted by the time not suspended, rather than the time imposed.

#### §4A1.2 Definitions and Instructions for Computing Criminal History

*United States v. Collins*, 412 F.3d 515 (4th Cir. 2005). The defendant's prior convictions for possession of crack cocaine with intent to deliver and malicious wounding were properly treated as two separate offenses, rather than as related offenses to be treated as one offense, for purposes of application of sentencing guidelines' career-offender enhancement. Although the prior offenses occurred in same area and during same general time frame and were consolidated for plea and sentencing and resulted in concurrent sentences, an intervening arrest separated the two prior offenses.

*See United States v. Green*, 436 F.3d 449 (4th Cir. 2006), §4B1.1, p. ??.

*United States v. Huggins*, 191 F.3d 532 (4th Cir. 1999), *cert. denied*, 529 U.S. 1112 (2000). Although the defendant's two prior felony convictions were consolidated for sentencing, because there was an intervening arrest, the sentences were not related. Consequently, the two prior felony convictions properly were considered as separate for purposes of qualifying the defendant as a career offender under §4B1.1(3).

*United States v. Mason*, 284 F.3d 555 (4th Cir. 2002). The district court erred when it used a juvenile sentence in a determination of the defendant's career offender status. Because the defendant received a juvenile sentence for the robbery offense and it occurred more than five years prior to the instant offense, the court improperly included it in determining the defendant's criminal history category and his career offender status.

*United States v. Stewart*, 49 F.3d 121 (4th Cir. 1995). The district court erred by enhancing the defendant's criminal history pursuant to §4A1.1(e) based upon his 24-day incarceration pending a state parole revocation hearing that resulted in neither revocation nor re-

incarceration. Although the defendant was found guilty of the parole violations, the Parole Commission did not revoke parole or reimpose a sentence, and he was released. The federal district court added two points to the defendant's criminal history pursuant to §4A1.1(e) because it considered this detention to constitute "imprisonment on a sentence." The circuit court, however, construed §4A1.1(e) to apply to the defendant only if his pre-revocation detention amounted to an extension or continuation of the original nine-year sentence for his 1983 conviction. The circuit court ruled that there was no basis for holding that the detention amounted to an extension of an original "imprisonment on a sentence" within the meaning of the guidelines, since the defendant's parole was not revoked and the defendant was not re-incarcerated. The circuit court further held that §4A1.1(e) "does not contemplate the assessment of criminal history points on the basis of detentions of the defendants who are awaiting parole revocation hearings when those hearings do not result in re-incarceration or revocation of parole." The appellate court vacated the sentence and remanded the case for resentencing.

### **§4A1.3      Departures Based on Inadequacy of Criminal History (Policy Statement)**

*United States v. Green*, 436 F.3d 449 (4th Cir. 2006). The district court erred as a matter of law in its application of §4A1.3(b) by concluding that the defendant's two prior drug convictions over-represented the defendant's criminal history and the likelihood that he would commit other crimes.

## **Part B Career Offenders and Criminal Livelihood**

### **§4B1.1      Career Offender**

*United States v. Bacon*, 94 F.3d 158 (4th Cir. 1996). The district court relied upon the defendant's allegation that newly discovered evidence proved his innocence of a prior state offense and refused to enhance the defendant's sentence as required under §4B1.1. The circuit court held that the district court was required to count the previous state offense as a predicate offense because the defendant did not allege that he was deprived of counsel or of any other constitutional right. Once a conviction is found to meet the requirements of a predicate offense under §4A1.2, Application Note 6, it must be considered unless it has been reversed, vacated, or invalidated in a prior case. A defendant may not collaterally attack his prior conviction unless federal or constitutional law provides a basis for such an attack. The court vacated and remanded the sentence for recalculation characterizing the defendant as a career offender.

*United States v. Green*, 436 F.3d 449 (4th Cir. 2006). The district court erred by counting the defendant's two prior drug convictions (which had occurred only two weeks apart and were sentenced on the same day) as one conviction pursuant to §4B1.1. The two convictions involved two separate arrests, they were not factually related, the two cases were never consolidated, and the court imposed two separate sentences; the convictions were not related for the purposes of

*United States v. Harp*, 406 F.3d 242 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 126 S. Ct. 297 (2005). To determine whether a conviction is for a crime punishable by a term of imprisonment exceeding one year, the court must consider the law in effect at the time of the conviction. The defendant's conviction under North Carolina law for possession with intent to distribute marijuana was a

"controlled substance offense" that qualified defendant as a career offender under the sentencing guidelines.

*United States v. Johnson*, 114 F.3d 435 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 522 U.S. 903 (1997). The defendant argued his prior conviction for assault on a female, which at the time of the defendant's conviction carried a maximum penalty of two years, could not be used in the career offender analysis because that offense carried only a 150-day maximum on the date of his federal sentencing. As a case of first impression for the federal courts, the Fourth Circuit held that the date of the conviction pursuant to §4B1.2(3) of the guidelines provides that the conviction is sustained on the date the guilt of the defendant is established. At the time, the defendant sustained his conviction for assault on a female in 1986, the offense was punishable by a statutory maximum of two years. Thus, the assault conviction was properly considered a prior felony conviction for guideline purposes.

*United States v. Johnson*, 246 F.3d 330 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 534 U.S. 884 (2001). The defendant appealed his career offender sentence, asserting that his conviction for possession of a sawed-off shotgun was not a crime of violence because it did not "otherwise involve[] conduct that presents a serious potential risk of physical injury to another." The court determined that the possession of a sawed-off shotgun "always creates a serious potential risk of physical injury to another." The court distinguished possession of a sawed-off shotgun from felony possession of a firearm, which the Fourth Circuit has ruled is not a crime of violence. The court agreed with the reasoning of the Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Circuits that "sawed-off shotguns are 'inherently dangerous and lack usefulness except for violent and criminal purposes,'" and is a markedly different type of weapon.

*United States v. Lawrence*, 349 F.3d 724 (4th Cir. 2003), *cert. denied*, 540 U.S. 1229 (2004). The district court decided to classify the defendant as a *de facto* career offender. The Fourth Circuit found that there were three possibilities a district court could follow when it found that the highest criminal history category was inadequate or that the defendant would be considered a career offender, but for the defendant's successful challenge to a predicate offense. First, a district court could exercise its discretion not to depart. Second, a district court could determine the extent of a departure by extrapolating from the existing sentencing table and considering the appropriateness of successively higher categories level by level. Finally, a sentencing court could, as the district court did in the instant case, directly depart to a sentencing range based on *de facto* career offender status, once the district court determined that a departure under §4A1.3 was warranted and that the defendant's prior criminal conduct was of sufficient seriousness to conclude that he should be treated as a career offender. Furthermore, a district court could sentence a defendant as a *de facto* career offender when he had committed two crimes that would qualify as predicate crimes for career offender status, but for some reason could not be counted.

*United States v. Martin*, 215 F.3d 470 (4th Cir. 2000). Bank larceny is not a crime of violence, even in the abstract, and therefore, the defendant was not eligible to be sentenced as a career offender.



*United States v. Neal*, 27 F.3d 90 (4th Cir. 1994). The appellate court reversed the district court's sentencing calculation that included a New York state drug possession conviction for purposes of applying the career offender guideline. Section 4B1.1 requires the defendant to have at least two prior felony convictions for a crime of violence or a controlled substance offense. The court joined the Ninth, Fifth, Tenth and Eleventh Circuits in recognizing that simple possession of drugs is not a "controlled substance offense." The New York statute under which the defendant was convicted only required an intent to distribute for one section of the statute; the other sections pertain to simple possession. Because it was unclear which section of the statute applied to the defendant's convictions, it was improper for the court to count the conviction for purposes of applying the career offender guideline.

*United States v. Pierce*, 278 F.3d 282 (4th Cir. 2002). The Fourth Circuit concluded that the taking indecent liberties with a child was a "crime of violence" because it constituted a forcible sex offense and created a serious potential risk of physical injury.

*United States v. Romary*, 246 F.3d 339 (4th Cir. 2001). The district court erred in its determination of the defendant's career offender status. The defendant had two prior felony convictions which met the definition of "crime of violence" for purposes of §4B1.1. One conviction from 1987 was challenged as not meeting the requirements of §4B1.1. The original sentence for the 1987 conviction was a ten-year suspended imprisonment with five years of probation. The district court determined that this conviction could not be used in computing criminal history. The Fourth Circuit held that the district court erred by not considering that the sentence for the 1987 conviction was reactivated upon revocation of probation in 1992, when the defendant was incarcerated. Thus, the original suspended sentence became a "sentence of imprisonment." Because the reimposition of the sentence dates back to the original conviction (1987), it still fell within the 15-year period required by §4A1.2(e)(1).

*United States v. Stockton*, 349 F.3d 755 (4th Cir. 2003), *cert. denied*, 541 U.S. 953 (2004) (Mem.) A sentencing court may depart downward where a defendant's criminal history category significantly over-represents the seriousness of a defendant's criminal history or the likelihood that a defendant would commit further crimes. The court noted that the same analysis applied when considering the classification as a career offender as over-representing the seriousness of his actual criminal history or his likelihood of recidivism. In the instant case, the defendant's criminal history reflected recidivism in controlled substance offenses; under such circumstances, an over-representativeness departure was almost never appropriate.

#### **§4B1.2**      Definitions of Terms Used in Section 4B1.1

*See United States v. Huggins*, 191 F.3d 532 (4th Cir. 1999), *cert. denied*, 529 U.S. 1112 (2000), §4A1.2, p. 21.

*See United States v. Payton*, 28 F.3d 17 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 976 (1994), §2K2.1, p. 10.

#### **§4B1.4**      Armed Career Criminal

*United States v. Brandon*, 247 F.3d 186 (4th Cir. 2001). The district court erred in its determination that the defendant was a career criminal under 18 U.S.C. § 924(e)(1) and in applying the corresponding enhancement to his sentence. For purposes of the Armed Career Criminal statute, a prior state conviction is a serious drug felony if the underlying crime involves possession with intent to manufacture or distribute a controlled substance, even if that intent is not a formal element of the crime. In the instant case, the intent to manufacture or distribute was neither charged nor was it inherent in the generic conduct underlying the defendant's prior conviction for drug possession. Accordingly, the conviction did not qualify as a serious drug felony, and the defendant did not qualify as an armed career criminal.

*United States v. Cook*, 26 F.3d 507 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 953 (1994). The district court erred in concluding that "obstruction of justice" cannot serve as a predicate offense under the Armed Career Criminal Act when the applicable state law broadly defines it to include violent and nonviolent means. The court held that *Taylor* is not restricted to burglary offenses and may be applied to all predicate convictions.

*United States v. Letterlough*, 63 F.3d 332 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 516 U.S. 955 (1995). On appeal, the defendant argued that two of his prior convictions were not "committed on occasions different from one other." The two prior felony convictions consisted of two undercover drug sales made on July 31, 1990, to a single undercover police officer. The appellate court ruled that each of the defendant's drug sales was a complete and final transaction, and therefore, an independent offense.

*United States v. O'Neal*, 180 F.3d 115 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 528 U.S. 980 (1999). The district court relied on a 1977 North Carolina felony larceny conviction when sentencing the defendant as an armed career criminal under 18 U.S.C. § 924(e) and §4B1.4. The defendant argued that the conviction should not count because the government did not include the conviction in the notice it filed with the district court of its intent to seek an enhanced sentence. The appellate court concluded that the presentence report gave the defendant adequate notice that the 1977 conviction was a possible predicate conviction.

*United States v. Thompson*, 421 F.3d 278 (4th Cir. 2005). The defendant's prior North Carolina convictions for breaking or entering buildings constituted violent felonies within meaning of the Armed Career Criminal Act (ACCA) as a matter of law.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: *Determining the Sentence***

### **Part B Probation**

#### **§5B1.4      Recommended Conditions of Probation and Supervised Release (Policy Statement)**

*United States v. Wesley*, 81 F.3d 482 (4th Cir. 1996). The district court did not abuse its discretion in ordering the defendant to abstain from alcohol as a condition of supervised release. Because the defendant in this case has prior convictions for alcohol related offenses and had

tested positive for drugs on various occasions, this condition of supervised release was acceptable.

## **Part C Imprisonment**

### **§5C1.2      Limitation on Applicability of Statutory Minimum Sentence in Certain Cases**

*United States v. Ivester*, 75 F.3d 182 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 518 U.S. 1011 (1996). The district court did not err in denying the defendant's request that he be sentenced under the safety valve provision of §5C1.2. The district court found that the defendant had failed to provide the government with any truthful information concerning his crime. Although noting that a defendant cannot be denied section 3553(f) relief merely because the information provided to the government is not useful, the circuit court determined that granting a section 3553(f) relief to defendants who are merely willing to be completely truthful would obviate the statutory requirement that defendants "provide" information. Therefore, defendants seeking to avail themselves of downward departures under §5C1.2 bear the burden of affirmatively acting to ensure that the government is truthfully provided with all information and evidence the defendants have concerning the relevant crimes.

## **Part E Restitution, Fines, Assessments, Forfeitures**

### **§5E1.1      Restitution**

*United States v. Alalade*, 204 F.3d 536 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 530 U.S. 1269 (2000). The defendant challenged the restitution amount ordered by the district court, arguing that it should be offset by the amount seized by the government. The appellate court examined the Mandatory Victims Restoration Act of 1996 (MVRA) and held that the district court lacked discretion under the MVRA to offset the restitution amount by the value of the items seized by the government.

*United States v. Dawkins*, 202 F.3d 711 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 529 U.S. 1121 (2000). The appellate court ordered the district court to recalculate the amount of loss and restitution. The district court failed to make a finding that keyed the defendant's financial situation to the restitution schedule ordered or that the order is feasible." The MVRA clearly requires a sentencing court to consider the factors listed in 18 U.S.C. § 3664(f)(2) and the court must make a factual finding keying the statutory factors to the type and manner of restitution ordered. The appellate court also held that the district court did not illegally delegate its judicial authority by allowing the probation officer to adjust the restitution payment schedule after considering the defendant's economic status. A district court may not delegate to the probation officer the final authority to establish the amount of the defendant's partial payment of restitution. The district court retained both the right to review the probation officer's findings and to exercise ultimate authority regarding the payment of restitution.

*United States v. Ubakanma*, 215 F.3d 421 (4th Cir. 2000). Pursuant to the Victim and Witness Protection Act of 1982, 18 U.S.C. § 3663, a court may order restitution only to victims

of an offense for losses traceable to the offense of conviction. The court must also consider various other factors, including the amount of loss sustained by the victim.

#### **§5E1.2**      Fines for Individual Defendants

*United States v. Hairston*, 46 F.3d 361 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 516 U.S. 840 (1995). The district court must determine whether the defendant has proved his present and prospective inability to pay a fine. The appellate court stated that "the defendant cannot meet his burden of proof by simply frustrating the court's ability to assess his financial condition."

*United States v. Ming Hong*, 242 F.3d 528 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 534 U.S. 823 (2001). The defendant was convicted of one count of failing to properly maintain and operate a treatment system and with 12 counts of discharging untreated waste water in violation of 33 U.S.C. § 1319(c)(1)(A). Relying on §5E1.3, the district court held that the maximum fine was \$25,000 per violation and therefore no more than \$300,000. Holding that the maximum schedule in §5E1.2 is not applicable if the defendant is convicted under a statute authorizing (A) a maximum fine greater than \$250,000, or (B) a fine for each day of violation, the Fourth Circuit reversed. The guidelines do not provide any maximum fine when the statute of conviction authorizes a fine per day of violation.

*United States v. Hyppolite*, 65 F.3d 1151 (4th Cir. 1995), *cert. denied*, 517 U.S. 1162 (1996). The district court did not abuse its discretion in imposing a \$300,000 fine when the defendant refused to complete a personal financial statement for the presentence report and provided no evidence to show an inability to pay.

#### **§5E1.4**      Forfeiture

*United States v. Najjar*, 300 F.3d 466 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 537 U.S. 1094 (2002). The court of appeals held that RICO forfeitures do not violate *Apprendi v. New Jersey* in that they do not increase penalties beyond the statutory maximum. Further, forfeitures are part of the punishment and sentencing determination and need not be submitted to jury.

### **Part G Implementing The Total Sentence of Imprisonment**

#### **§5G1.3**      Imposition of Sentence on Defendant Subject to Undischarged Term of Imprisonment

*United States v. Johnson*, 48 F.3d 806 (4th Cir. 1995). The defendant's sentence was vacated and remanded to the district court to apply §5G1.3, where it was not clear from the record or the sentencing order whether the 46-month sentence was imposed to run concurrently or consecutively to the defendant's undischarged state sentence.

*United States v. Mosley*, 200 F.3d 218 (4th Cir. 1999). When using the 1995 or later editions of the sentencing guideline dealing with the imposition of a sentence on a defendant who is subject to an undischarged term of imprisonment, the district court is not required to

calculate a hypothetical combined guideline range. Instead, a sentencing court need only consider the relevant factors that §5G1.3(c) directs the court to consider.

*United States v. Puckett*, 61 F.3d 1092 (4th Cir. 1995). The district court did not err by ordering that the defendant's sentence for the instant offense run consecutively to his parole revocation sentence. The circuit court found that although the district court did not specifically state that it was applying either §5G1.3(c) or §7B1.3, its reasoning indicates that it considered the appropriate factors under the relevant guidelines. The district court listed several factors that formed the basis of its decision to have the present sentence run consecutively, including the frequency of the defendant's drug convictions, the severity of his PCP offense, and the court's desire not to minimize the punishments for two different, unrelated drug offenses.

*United States v. Van Metre*, 150 F.3d 339 (4th Cir. 1998). The district court erred in relying upon Application Note 5 of §5G1.3 to impose the statutory maximum term for solicitation on the defendant. The court of appeals held that the district court erroneously interpreted Note 5 to allow the imposition of the statutory maximum. Nothing in Note 5 allows the district court to depart from the applicable guideline range.

## **Part H Specific Offender Characteristics**

### **§5H1.4      Physical Condition, Including Drug or Alcohol Dependence or Abuse; Gambling Addiction (Policy Statement)**

*United States v. Carr*, 271 F.3d 172 (4th Cir. 2001), *cert. denied*, 540 U.S. 1012 (2003). The Fourth Circuit dismissed a defendant's appeal after the district court refused to grant him a downward departure based on his physical impairment, AIDS. The court found that the district court's refusal to depart was not subject to appellate review because the district court ruled that the impairment was not so extraordinary as to warrant departure under §5H1.4.

### **§5H1.6      Family Ties and Responsibilities (Policy Statement)**

*United States v. Wilson*, 114 F.3d 429 (4th Cir. 1997). The district court abused its discretion in departing downward from the applicable guideline range because of the defendant's extraordinary family responsibilities. The circuit court found that the defendant's deprived background was a motivating force behind the decision of the district court to depart. The district court, recognizing that §5H1.12 prohibited a departure based on disadvantaged upbringing, attempted to justify the departure under §5H1.6, based on family ties and the defendant's ability to take care of his own children. The circuit court found that the defendant's family circumstances were not so extraordinary as to justify the departure. The circuit court found that the district court improperly departed, and vacated the sentence and remanded for resentencing.

## **Part K Departures**

### **Standard of Appellate Review—Departures and Refusals to Depart**

*United States v. Daughtrey*, 874 F.2d 213 (4th Cir. 1989). The level of review for determining reasonableness of departures depends on whether issue is (1) correctness of the factual findings underlying the decision to depart; (2) relevance of a factor used to justify a departure; (3) the adequacy of the Commission's consideration of the factor in formulating the guidelines; or (4) the reasonableness of the extent of the departure. The more fact-driven the determination, the more deference given.

#### **§5K1.1**      Substantial Assistance to Authorities (Policy Statement)

*United States v. Barnette*, 427 F.3d 259 (4th Cir. 2005), *cert. denied*, No. 05-8765, 2006 WL 387078 (U.S. Feb. 21, 2006). The appeal turned on the distinction between §5K1.1 and Fed. R. Crim. P. 32(b): While §5K1.1 rewards the defendant for substantial assistance prior to sentencing, Rule 35(b) rewards defendants who provide substantial assistance post-sentencing. The circuit court did not take the district court's statement that the defendant might have a chance to further reduce his sentence in the future as evidence that the district court did not fully exercise its §5K1.1 authority.

*United States v. Butler*, 272 F.3d 683 (4th Cir. 2001). The defendant claimed that under 18 U.S.C. § 3553(e) and §5K1.1, due to his substantial assistance, he was entitled to a downward departure. While the defendant provided the government with substantial assistance in the investigation and prosecution of a bank robbery, he had also threatened the life of a codefendant, causing the government's refusal to file a downward departure motion for him. The Fourth Circuit stated that under 18 U.S.C. § 3553(e) and §5K1.1, district courts are permitted to "impose a sentence below the statutory minimum 'to reflect a defendant's substantial assistance in the investigation or prosecution of another person who has committed an offense,'" but the granting of such a sentence is a power, not a duty provided by the government. The Fourth Circuit held that the refusal to file in this case was rationally related to a government interest. According to the court, a defendant is not rendering substantial assistance if he is threatening the life of another government witness before his sentencing hearing.

*United States v. Hill*, 70 F.3d 321 (4th Cir. 1995). The defendant appealed the extent of the downward departure based on his substantial assistance to the government. He asserted that the district court's decision to reduce his base offense level by only two levels was based on its erroneous consideration of a prison term imposed on him by the district court in Texas. The appellate court concluded that the sentence did not result from an incorrect application of the guidelines, and the appeal was an artful attempt to gain review of the district court's exercise of discretion. As such, the appeal was dismissed.

*United States v. Johnson*, 393 F.3d 466 (4th Cir. 2004). The appellate court ruled that a district court, on motion from the government for a downward departure pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3553(e), can impose a sentence below the guideline range even if the defendant is subject to a statutory minimum sentence that exceeds the guideline range. Section 3553(e) places no limit on the court's authority to impose a sentence below the statutory minimum or the low-end of the guideline range as long as the extent of the departure was reasonable under 18 U.S.C. § 3742(e).

*United States v. LeRose*, 219 F.3d 335 (4th Cir. 2000). Absent a determination of an unconstitutional or irrational motive on the part of the government, it was error for a district court to grant a reduction for substantial assistance without a government motion. The burden is on the defendant to make a substantial threshold showing that the government's refusal resulted from improper or suspect motives. In the instant case, the district court impermissibly shifted the burden to the government without first determining whether the defendant had met his threshold burden.

*United States v. Pearce*, 191 F.3d 488 (4th Cir. 1999). Although the district court's discretion to depart under §5K1.1 is broad, it is limited in two ways: (1) the factors it considers must relate to "the nature, extent and significance of the defendant's assistance"; (2) the extent of any departure must be "reasonable." In the instant case, the district court erroneously held that once the government files a §5K1.1 motion, the court has "total discretion." The Fourth Circuit reversed and remanded for resentencing. With respect to one defendant, the circuit court determined that the district court considered irrelevant factors; failed to give substantial weight to the government's evaluation; failed to give its reasons for departing; and departed to an unreasonable extent. With respect to the other defendant, the district court's 20-level departure was "unreasonable in extent" given his level of cooperation.

*United States v. Pillow*, 191 F.3d 403 (4th Cir. 1999), *cert. denied*, 528 U.S. 1177 (2000). The Fourth Circuit determined that the starting point for calculating a downward departure under §5K1.1 and 18 U.S.C. § 3553(e) was the statutory minimum sentence—not what the guidelines would be absent the statutory minimum sentence.

*United States v. Wallace*, 22 F.3d 84 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 910 (1994). The circuit court did not err in refusing the defendant's request to depart downward under §5K1.1 based on the defendant's "substantial assistance" in order to enforce his plea agreement with the government. A court may not grant such a departure without a government motion unless 1) the government obligated itself in the plea agreement or 2) the refusal to make the motion was based on an unconstitutional motive. Neither factor was present in this case.

## **§5K2.0**      Grounds for Departure (Policy Statement)

*United States v. Bailey*, 112 F.3d 758 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 522 U.S. 896 (1997). The district court properly departed upward from the standard guideline sentence for kidnapping. The district court found four aggravating factors which it used to justify the upward departures and the defendant's increased sentence including §§5K2.2 (physical injury), 5K2.8 (extreme conduct), 5K2.5 (property damage), and 5K2.4 (abduction or unlawful restraint). The defendant objected to the consideration of §5K2.2 as a ground for departure because §2A4.1(b)(2) of the guidelines under kidnapping provides for a four-level increase if the victim sustained permanent or life-threatening bodily injury. The Fourth Circuit held that the extent of the upward departure should ordinarily depend on the extent of the injury, the degree to which it may prove to be permanent, and the extent to which the injury was intended. When the victim suffers a major permanent disability, and when such an injury was intentionally inflicted, a substantial departure may be appropriate. Similarly, the defendant objected to the use of §5K2.4 because the crimes of kidnapping and domestic violence contain the elements of abduction and unlawful restraint.

The circuit court held that because of the egregious nature of the restraint in this case, being held captive in the trunk of a car for an extended period of time, a departure based on §§5K2.2 and 5K2.5 was completely reasonable. Additionally, the defendant argued that a departure under §5K2.5 was erroneous because the four-level adjustment for a permanent or life-threatening bodily injury mentioned in §2A4.1(b)(2) obviated the use of §5K2.5 because in every case involving serious injury, there will always be significant medical expenses. The district court rejected this argument and held that the district court correctly referred to §5K2.5 due to the massive future medical expenses involved. Finally, the defendant argued that the use of §5K2.8 was unwarranted because the facts underlying the finding of extreme conduct were erroneous. The circuit court rejected this argument, holding that even in the light most favorable to the defendant, the defendant's conduct was intentionally brutish, cruel, and extreme.

*United States v. Fenner*, 147 F.3d 360 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 525 U.S. 1030 (1998). The district court properly concluded it could not base a downward departure on the increase in sentencing range that resulted from application of a cross-reference. The guidelines take into account that the application of the cross-reference will result in an enhanced guideline range.

*United States v. Hairston*, 96 F.3d 102 (4th Cir. 1996), *cert. denied*, 519 U.S. 1114 (1997). The district court abused its discretion in granting a downward departure based on the defendant's "extraordinary restitution." The defendant, through the generosity of friends, repaid the bank she had embezzled \$250,000 to settle her civil liability. The district court determined that her efforts merited a five-level departure for "extraordinary restitution." The circuit court concluded that because the guidelines already take restitution into consideration in the context of a sentence reduction for acceptance of responsibility, restitution is a discouraged factor that can support a departure only if the restitution in a particular case demonstrates an extraordinary acceptance of responsibility. Here, the court found that the defendant's restitution was not extraordinary.

*United States v. Myers*, 66 F.3d 1364 (4th Cir. 1995). The district court erred in departing for physical injury because the injury was already taken into account under §2B3.1(b)(3)(C) in determining the guideline range, and the district court made no finding that that adjustment was not sufficient. The appellate court found, however, that the reliance on physical harm as a factor in the upward departure decision was harmless, where the court based its decision to depart on the egregious behavior of the defendants in wantonly inflicting pain on the victim.

*United States v. Perkins*, 108 F.3d 512 (4th Cir. 1997). The district court granted a downward departure to the defendant based on three justifications: comparatively lenient treatment of similarly culpable codefendants; unwarranted racial disparity in sentencing stemming from the fact that most of the codefendants are white and the defendant is black; and a shorter sentence more accurately reflects the defendant's relative culpability. The Government appealed the departure, and the Fourth Circuit reversed. Disparate sentences among codefendants is not a permissible ground for departure. Race can never be a basis for a departure. As for a departure based on "relative culpability," the circuit court dismissed this argument stating that such a departure would circumvent the district court's factual determinations.



*United States v. Pitts*, 176 F.3d 239 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 528 U.S. 911 (1999). The defendant was an FBI agent who sold confidential information to Russia. The district court applied the two-level abuse of trust enhancement pursuant to §3B1.3, and then departed upward one level for extraordinary abuse of trust. The appellate court held that an upward departure based upon an extraordinary abuse of trust is warranted if the combination of the level of trust violated by the defendant and the level of harm created solely by the violation of that trust falls outside the heartland of cases that qualify for the enhancement. Here, the level of trust placed in the defendant was unmatched. He was a supervisory special agent of the FBI and a foreign counterintelligence operative whose job was to thwart the espionage activities of the very foreign intelligence service with whom he conspired. In violating that “awesome responsibility and trust,” the defendant violated a level of trust to which most men are never exposed.

*United States v. Weinberger*, 91 F.3d 642 (4th Cir. 1996). The defendant was convicted of submitting fraudulent claims to Medicaid and Medicare. Under the plea agreement, the defendant was required to pay restitution of \$545,000. However, in a consent judgment in a civil forfeiture action, the defendant agreed to forfeit over \$600,000 which was credited against the restitution in the plea agreement. The district court departed downward under §5K2.0 because the defendant had paid a sum “beyond” complete restitution. The circuit court reversed, holding that exposure to civil forfeiture is not a basis for a downward departure. Forfeiture was considered by the Sentencing Commission and was intended to be in addition to, and not in lieu, of imprisonment. Additionally, civil forfeiture actions do not suggest any reduced culpability or contrition on the part of a defendant that might warrant a sentence reduction. The circuit court concluded that the district court’s departure was an error of law and therefore, an abuse of discretion.

#### **§5K2.1**      Death (Policy Statement)

*United States v. Terry*, 142 F.3d 702 (4th Cir. 1998), *cert. denied*, 528 U.S. 853 (1999). The district court abused its discretion by departing upward four levels in determining the defendant’s sentence for two counts of reckless involuntary manslaughter and an additional uncharged death. The circuit court held that the additional uncharged death of a participant in the aggressive driving could provide a basis for upward departure, even though that victim had been “an active participant in the activity that resulted in his death.” The sentencing court erred, however, by failing to make additional findings of fact to support the extent of the departure. The guidelines provide that the extent of an upward departure for death should depend on the dangerousness of the defendant’s conduct, the extent to which death or serious injury was intended or knowingly risked, and the extent to which the offense level for the offense of conviction, as determined by the other Chapter Two guidelines, already reflects the risk of personal injury. The circuit court noted that the sentencing court failed to consider these factors and did not make any findings as to the defendant’s state of mind.

*United States v. Van Metre*, 150 F.3d 339 (4th Cir. 1998). The district court did not err in departing upward based on the murder of the victim in a kidnaping case. The court of appeals held that unless §2A4.1 of the 1990 guidelines takes into account the death of the kidnaping victim as occurred in the instant case, the court could upwardly depart on that basis. After examining the guideline, the Fourth Circuit concluded that the guideline does not take into

account the scenario where the victim was kidnaped for the purpose of sexual assault and only later did the defendant form the intent to murder her. Therefore, an upward departure to life imprisonment based on the victim's death was not an abuse of discretion.

**§5K2.3**      Extreme Psychological Injury (Policy Statement)

*United States v. Terry*, 142 F.3d 702 (4th Cir. 1998), *cert. denied*, 528 U.S. 853 (1999). The defendant was convicted of two counts of involuntary manslaughter for the deaths of two commuters who died when he lost control of his car while he was engaging in aggressive driving. The circuit court held that the sentencing court abused its discretion in departing upward three levels for the extreme psychological injury to the family members of the victims who were killed. Although a departure for psychological injury to a victim is not limited to the direct victim of the offense of conviction but can also apply to indirect victims, an indirect victim is a victim because of his relationship to the offense, not because of his relationship to the direct victim. Here, the court held that there was no evidence that the families in question had any relationship to the offense beyond their relationship to the direct victims.

**§5K2.8**      Extreme Conduct (Policy Statement)

*United States v. Bonetti*, 277 F.3d 441 (4th Cir. 2002). The appellate court held that the decision to depart from a particular guideline must be made based on a five-step analysis: (1) a determination of the circumstances and consequences of the offense, (2) whether any of those circumstances are atypical enough to remove them from the "heartland" of the offense, (3) whether the factor is a forbidden, encouraged, discouraged, or unmentioned basis for departure, (4) assuming it is an encouraged factor, whether the guideline has already accounted for the factor, and (5) whether a departure based on these factors is in fact warranted. The defendant was convicted of conspiracy to harbor an illegal alien and of harboring an illegal alien. The unlawful alien in question was brought to the United States by the defendant, and was completely dependent on the defendant as she did not speak the language, did not have control over her own passport or visa, and was illiterate. The defendant and his wife kept her in virtually slave-like conditions, did not pay her, forced her to work as many as 15 or more hours a day, and the defendant's wife regularly abused her. The defendant held the victim for more than 15 years in essentially forced servitude. The appellate court agreed with the district court that this rose to the level of extreme conduct. The appellate court held that there was no abuse of discretion in the district court's finding that the duration of the offense prolonged the victim's pain and humiliation and warranted an upward departure.

**§5K2.13**      Diminished Capacity (Policy Statement)

*United States v. Bowe*, 257 F.3d 336 (4th Cir. 2001). The district court granted a §5K2.13 departure for diminished capacity. The appellate court concluded that the defendant did not satisfy the criteria set forth in §5K2.13, which states that if the offense involved actual violence or a serious threat of violence, then the court may not depart below the applicable guideline range. Because the offense involved violence and serious threats of violence, the district court erred in granting the departure.

*United States v. Riggs*, 370 F.3d 382 (4th Cir.2004),*cert. granted*, 543 U.S. 1110, *opinion reinstated by*, 410 F.3d 136 (4th Cir. 2005). The defendant was ineligible for the downward departure under §5K2.13 because the facts and circumstances of his offense indicated a need to protect the public and involved a serious threat of violence. A serious threat of violence existed at time of the defendant's traffic stop/arrest, given fact that the defendant was carrying firearm and refused to comply with officer's order to remove his hand from jacket where gun was concealed. A need to protect the public existed given the defendant's history of not taking antipsychotic medication prescribed for his condition.

**§5K2.14**      Public Welfare (Policy Statement)

*United States v. Terry*, 142 F.3d 702 (4th Cir. 1998). The circuit court remanded the case to allow the sentencing court to determine whether the danger created by the defendant's reckless conduct while driving was outside the "heartland" of the typical reckless driving involuntary manslaughter case. The circuit court noted that reckless driving is already taken into account by the involuntary manslaughter guideline. On remand, the sentencing court must determine whether the defendant's reckless driving was "present to an exceptional degree" or was in some other way different from the ordinary case where the factor is present.

**CHAPTER SEVEN:** *Violations of Probation and Supervised Release*

**Part B Probation and Supervised Release Violations**

**§7B1.3**      Revocation of Probation or Supervised Release (Policy Statement)

*United States v. Clark*, 30 F.3d 23 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 1027 (1994). The district court erred in refusing to apply the provisions of 18 U.S.C. § 3583(g), which in this case would have required the defendant to receive a sentence of at least one year in prison. The government presented positive evidence that the defendant had used a controlled substance during his term of supervised release. Instead of sentencing the defendant to one year in prison pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3583(g), the district court sentenced the defendant to nine months and eight days in prison pursuant to §7B1.4, reasoning that 18 U.S.C. § 3583(g) was "too harsh in the circumstances and that it limited the court's sentencing discretion too much. The Fourth Circuit held that the application of 18 U.S.C. § 3583(g) was required; once a district court credits laboratory analysis as establishing the presence of a controlled substance, possession under section 3583 necessarily follows.

*United States v. Pierce*, 75 F.3d 173 (4th Cir. 1996). The Assimilated Crime Act ("ACA") provides that a person who commits a state crime on a federal enclave shall be subject to a "like punishment," which requires only that the punishment be similar, not identical. Because the state statute authorized parole, and supervised release was similar to parole, imposition of a term of supervised release did not violate the ACA's requirement that the defendant be subject to "like punishment." Although the total sentence exceeded the maximum term of imprisonment authorized by the state statute, the court upheld the sentence because supervised release is not part of the incarceration portion of a sentence. Therefore, supervised

release under the ACA may exceed the maximum term of incarceration provided for by state law.

*United States v. Woodrup*, 86 F.3d 359 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 519 U.S. 944 (1996). The district court did not violate the Double Jeopardy Clause when it imposed a 24-month sentence for the revocation of the defendant's supervised release and then imposed a consecutive 240-month sentence for the bank robbery upon which the revocation was based. When a defendant violates the terms of his supervised release, the sentence imposed for the violation is an authorized part of the original sentence. Thus, the imposition of a sentence upon revocation of supervised release is not a punishment for the conduct prompting the revocation, but a modification of the original sentence for which supervised release was authorized. The Fourth Circuit joined the Ninth Circuit in holding that the sentencing of a defendant for criminal behavior that previously served as the basis for revocation of supervised release does not violate the Double Jeopardy Clause.

#### **§7B1.4**      Term of Imprisonment (Policy Statement)

*See United States v. Clark*, 30 F.3d 23 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 1027 (1994), §7B1.3, p. 35.

*United States v. Davis*, 53 F.3d 638 (4th Cir. 1995). Chapter Seven policy statements regarding the revocation of supervised release are advisory in nature and are not binding on the courts.

*United States v. Denard*, 24 F.3d 599 (4th Cir. 1994). Title 18 U.S.C. § 3565(a) provides that when a probationer is found in possession of a controlled substance, the court shall revoke the sentence of probation and sentence the defendant to no less than one-third of the original sentence. The original sentence means the defendant's original guideline imprisonment range. Therefore, the sentence must be at a minimum one-third of the maximum sentence in his original guideline range and at a maximum the guideline's maximum.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT:** *Sentencing of Organizations*

### **Part C Fines**

#### **§8C2.5**      Culpability Score

*United States v. Brothers Construction Company of Ohio, Inc.*, 219 F.3d 300 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 531 U.S. 1037 (2000). The defendant corporations were convicted of conspiracy to defraud the United States, two counts of wire fraud, and one count of making a false statement. The defendant corporation appealed, *inter alia*, the district court's imposition of a three-level sentencing enhancement for obstruction of justice, pursuant to §8C2.5(e). The district court found that an agent of the defendant corporation had made a false statement in a letter to investigators and gave perjurious grand jury testimony regarding the organization's compliance with a state program fostering the development of disadvantaged business enterprises. The

defendant corporation argued that the enhancement constituted impermissible double counting insofar as the letter constituted the act for which the defendant corporation was convicted of conspiracy to defraud and making a false statement. The appellate court held that because the district court identified the grand jury testimony as another separate, independent basis for applying the obstruction of justice enhancement, the enhancement was not erroneous. Further, the district court's finding that the grand jury testimony was false as to a material fact and was willfully given to obstruct justice was not clearly erroneous.

## **FEDERAL RULES OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE**

### **Rule 11**

*United States v. Cannady*, 283 F.3d 641 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 537 U.S. 936 (2002). The defendant pled guilty to conspiracy to distribute and possession with intent to distribute cocaine and heroin. Included in the plea agreement was a waiver of the defendant's right to initiate proceedings under 28 U.S.C. § 2255. The government informed the defendant that the waiver provision was required by the judge for all plea agreements and the defendant agreed. At the plea proceeding the judge told the defendant that if he did not agree to the waiver there would be no agreement. Rule 11(e)(1) provides that the attorneys for the defendant and the government may participate in plea negotiations but the judge may not. The appellate court held that since the parties had negotiated and signed a plea agreement before the judge became involved, his comments did not meet the definition of participation under Rule 11(e)(1). Furthermore, the appellate court held that there was nothing coercive about the judge's comments during the plea proceeding—rather the judge was encouraging the defendant to make a decision whether to plead guilty or go to trial; the choice was his.

*United States v. Carr*, 271 F.3d 172 (4th Cir. 2001), *cert. denied*, 540 U.S. 1012 (2003). Before accepting a guilty plea, the court must satisfy itself that all elements of the charged offense were committed. Where the record lacked a sufficient factual basis to support a federal arson charge due to a lack of evidence of use of the property in interstate commerce, the court vacated the judgment of conviction.

*United States v. General*, 278 F.3d 389 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 535 U.S. 949 (2002). The district court did not commit reversible error by not reciting the mandatory minimum during the plea hearing. Although Rule 11 requires the district court to inform the defendant of any statutory mandatory minimums before accepting a guilty plea, the failure to do so did not violate the defendant's substantial rights in this case because the plea agreement provided all the information the defendant would have gotten from the court.

*United States v. Goins*, 51 F.3d 400 (4th Cir. 1995). The trial court committed plain error when it failed to inform the defendant during the Rule 11 hearing that a guilty plea would result in a mandatory minimum sentence. The error affected the defendant's substantial rights because the defendant had not been aware of the mandatory minimum sentence until the presentence report was prepared, nearly three months after the plea had been accepted. The circuit court held

that the Rule 11 violation cannot be considered harmless if the defendant had no knowledge of the mandatory minimum at the time of the plea.

*United States v. Good*, 25 F.3d 218 (4th Cir. 1994). Although advised of the possible minimum and maximum penalties, the defendant claimed that he was unaware when he pled guilty that his punishment could include additional incarceration if he violated the terms of his supervised release. He argued that since 21 U.S.C. § 841(b)(1)(B) only provides for a minimum period of supervised release, the judge could extend his supervised release term to life and thereby expose him to the possibility of prison for life. The circuit court concluded that the maximum supervised release time for a first offender guilty of a Class B felony is five years pursuant to §5D1.2. The lower court's failure to warn him of this conclusion was harmless error because the combined sentence of incarceration and supervised release actually received by the defendant is less than the maximum term he was told he could receive.

*United States v. Martinez*, 277 F.3d 517 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 537 U.S. 899 (2002). The district court committed plain error under Rule 11 by advising the defendant of incorrect potential penalties during his plea hearing and by failing to advise the defendant that he could not withdraw his plea after sentencing. The court held that the defendant failed to demonstrate that either error affected his substantial rights. The defendant must show that, absent the errors made by the court, he would not have agreed to the plea agreement. Because the defendant was facing multiple charges, many of which were dropped through the plea agreement, it is unlikely that he would have changed his mind about the agreement based on a different potential sentence for only one of the remaining charges.

*United States v. Thorne*, 153 F.3d 130 (4th Cir. 1998), *cert. denied*, 531 U.S. 895 (2000). The district court's failure to inform the defendant at his Rule 11 hearing that his sentence would include a term of supervised release and to describe to him the nature of supervised release before accepting his guilty plea was error. The court of appeals held that the court's oversight was not harmless error because the maximum term the defendant understood he could receive was less than his actual sentence. In the event he violated release, he would be subject to a further five years of incarceration, resulting in an even greater disparity. The court of appeals ordered that the defendant be permitted to withdraw his plea.

*United States v. Osborne*, 345 F.3d 281 (4th Cir. 2003). The district court was not required, absent a defendant's request, to review *de novo* the Rule 11 proceedings conducted by a magistrate judge where the defendant clearly consented to entering a plea before a magistrate judge and raised no objection to the Rule 11 proceeding.

## **POST-BOOKER (UNITED STATES V. BOOKER, 543 U.S. 220 (2005))**

### *Application of the Guidelines*

*United States v. Hughes*, 401 F.3d 540 (4th Cir. 2005). Although the sentencing guidelines are no longer mandatory, *Booker* makes clear that a sentencing court must still consult the guidelines and take them into account when sentencing. The district court should first

determine the appropriate sentencing range under the guidelines, making all factual findings appropriate for that determination. The court should consider this sentencing range along with the other factors described in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a), and then impose a sentence. If that sentence falls outside the guidelines range, the court should explain its reasons for the departure as required by 18 U.S.C. § 3553(c)(2). The sentence must be "within the statutorily prescribed range and ... reasonable."

*United States v. White*, 405 F.3d 208 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 126 S. Ct. 668 (2005). The defendant asserted a claim that the district court erred in sentencing him under a mandatory, rather than an advisory, guidelines regime. The Fourth Circuit refused to presume prejudice from the mandatory use of the guidelines. In any given case after *Booker*, a district court will calculate, consult, and take into account the exact same guideline range that it would have applied under the pre-*Booker* mandatory guidelines regime. This guideline range remains the starting point for the sentencing decision. And, if the district court decides to impose a sentence outside that range, it should explain its reasons for doing so. Thus, the court concluded that while the appropriate circumstances for imposing a sentence outside the guideline range will depend on the facts of individual cases, most sentences will continue to fall within the applicable guideline range.

*United States v. Evans*, 416 F.3d 298 (4th Cir. 2005). Imposition of 96-month prison sentence for a defendant who pled guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm, based upon the purported judicial determination that the firearm was stolen, did not violate defendant's Sixth Amendment right to jury trial where the sentence did not exceed the maximum authorized by the facts that the defendant admitted.

#### *Plain Error Review*

*United States v. Hughes*, 401 F.3d 540 (4th Cir. 2005). In order to determine for purposes of plain error review whether the defendant was prejudiced by the district court's Sixth Amendment error under the mandatory guidelines regime in effect at the time of sentencing, the question the court must decide is whether the defendant has established that the sentence imposed by the district court as a result of the Sixth Amendment violation was longer than that to which he would otherwise be subject. Because the maximum sentence permitted by the jury verdict was 12 months and the district court imposed a sentence of 46 months, the error affected the defendant's substantial rights. The court remanded for re-sentencing. *See also United States v. Ebersole*, 411 F.3d 517 (4th Cir. 2005) (same); *United States v. Pierce*, 409 F.3d 228 (4th Cir. 2005) (same); *United States v. Johnson*, 400 F.3d 187 (4th Cir. 2005) (determining that because the defendant's sentence was based upon a crime for which he was not convicted and exceeded that which would be available absent the finding of the crime of sexual abuse, the court found plain error had occurred and remanded for re-sentencing).

#### *Review for Reasonableness*

*United States v. Bartram*, 407 F.3d 307 (4th Cir. 2005), *cert. denied*, No. 05-8263, 2006 WL 386732 (U.S. Feb. 21, 2006). Imposing guideline upward adjustments and departures predicated on facts that were not charged in the indictment and found by a jury beyond a

reasonable doubt did not violate the Sixth Amendment rights of a defendant who had pled guilty, where district court's fact findings were based on the defendant's own admissions. The district court examined and applied the sentencing guidelines just as *Booker* instructs. Based on the district court's careful deliberation in sentencing the defendant and because the district court sentenced him within the statutory guidelines, indeed near the low end, the Fourth Circuit determined that the sentence was reasonable.

### *Criminal History Enhancements*

*United States v. Cheeks*, 415 F.3d 349 (4th Cir. 2005), 126 S. Ct. 640 (2005). The enhancement of a criminal defendant's sentence on the basis of three previous convictions for purposes of sentencing under Armed Career Criminal Act does not violate the defendant's Sixth Amendment rights, even when the prior convictions were not alleged in the indictment or admitted by the defendant during his plea colloquy.

*United States v. Thompson*, 421 F.3d 278 (4th Cir. 2005), *cert. denied*, No. 05-7266, 2006 WL 521274 (U.S. Mar. 6, 2006). Application of the Armed Career Criminal Act based on at least three convictions committed on different occasions did not require jury fact finding to comply with Sixth Amendment.

*United States v. Washington*, 404 F.3d 834 (4th Cir. 2005). The defendant's Sixth Amendment right to trial by jury was violated when district court, in sentencing him for being a felon in possession of a firearm, enhanced his offense level based upon a prior conviction. The court relied on facts outside the indictment containing the defendant's prior state-law breaking and entering conviction in finding that prior conviction involved conduct that presented a serious potential risk of physical injury to another. Thus, the enhancement to the defendant's offense level was based on more than just the fact of his prior conviction.

### *Appeal Waiver*

*United States v. Blick*, 408 F.3d 162 (4th Cir. 2005). An appeal waiver in a plea agreement, barring the defendant from appealing "any sentence within the maximum provided in the statute of conviction, or the manner in which that sentence was determined" on "any ground whatsoever," precluded the defendant from appealing a 30-month prison term, on the ground that the sentence was miscalculated under the sentencing guidelines, or on the ground that his Sixth Amendment right to a jury trial was violated by a sentence based upon judicially-determined facts. The defendant agreed to be sentenced in accordance with the sentencing guidelines in effect at time of his sentence, so the defendant was sentenced in the manner that he anticipated, despite the subsequent decision by the Supreme Court in *Booker*. *See also United States v. Amaya-Portillo*, 423 F.3d 427 (4th Cir. 2005) (findings that the defendant waived the right to appeal his sentence on ground that mandatory sentencing guidelines were applied).

*United States v. Johnson*, 410 F.3d 137 (4th Cir. 2005). The Fourth Circuit upheld an appeal waiver, entered into before the Supreme Court issued *Booker*, holding that the Supreme Court's issuance of *Booker* did not render defendant's guilty plea unknowing or involuntary. The



court also held that the defendant's *Booker* challenge did not fall beyond scope of his pre-*Booker* appeal waiver.

*Unpublished Cases of Import*

*United States v. Ashworth*, 139 Fed. Appx. 525 (4th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 126 S. Ct. 765 (2005). *Booker* does not preclude the sentencing court from considering acquitted conduct in determining the guideline range as long as the court's consideration of acquitted conduct does not support any mandatory calculation, or violate any of the judge's obligations to consider relevant sentencing factors. On remand, the district court should determine by a preponderance of the evidence whether the defendant conspired to manufacture and distribute methamphetamine and, if so, the court should recalculate the base offense level accordingly.

*United States v. Catala*, 134 Fed. Appx. 617 (4th Cir. 2005). Even where the defendant has signed a plea agreement that contemplates a minimum sentence and refers to an indictment alleging his involvement in a conspiracy for a base-level drug amount, the defendant may argue at sentencing that the attributable drug weight is less than the statutory minimum and still qualify for acceptance of responsibility and the safety valve reduction. The lack of a government motion called for in the guidelines did not invalidate the sentencing court's decision to award a third-level adjustment for timely acceptance of responsibility, as the advisory nature of the guidelines would apply on remand.

*United States v. Rattler*, 139 Fed. Appx. 534 (4th Cir. 2005). A restitution order based on the court's fact findings upon the defendant's conviction for assault inflicting serious injury within an Indian Reservation did not violate the defendant's Sixth Amendment right to trial by jury. Because there is no statutory maximum for restitution, the Sixth Amendment and *Booker* do not apply to restitution.